

our upset equilibrium, which all admit, there are no other means than to establish a better distribution of profits in trade.

The Canadian people can no longer put up with the gnawing of these seasonal profiteers who, like birds of prey, watch for their victims. No matter what may be their social standing, the organizers of such coalitions practised on such a large scale, under so sad circumstances, during a crisis which has lasted so long and through such a hard winter, cannot expect less than being placed under the control of government authority. And it would be only fair.

Our duty to our country takes precedence over friendship as the hon. member for Labelle (Mr. Bourassa) stated recently; we are the people's servants, the guardians of our fellow-citizens' welfare. Therefore, I am led to believe that it will be an easy task for the members of the house to set aside all party lines and to consider this resolution from a human and legal angle.

It is no more a question of playing the part of Pontius Pilate! No one in this house will deny that these coal companies, brushing aside all human feelings, have organized a shameful coalition, and this, in spite of our laws. It is our duty to immediately organize the full trade, in order to forestall the sad plight which we witnessed last winter.

May I, sir, in closing my remarks translate freely the words of one of the intimate friends of my colleagues opposite, on an occasion almost similar to this one: Gentlemen of the House of Commons, you should be most scrupulous not to offend our fellow-citizens, those—namely the nation—you must consider yourselves the servants; I beg of you not to violate the fundamental and traditional rights of the people in respect to their legislators. The country is passing through a difficult period, times are very hard (I should think so, 40° below zero and coal at \$20 per ton, when practically no one has work!) Few are the Canadian homes which have not to struggle with economic difficulties. All wonder whether this present regime will be able to carry on. Even, at the present hour, while we are discussing, the question of our democratic institutions is raised, some contend that they will not survive the upheaval. Public opinion is no doubt more restless than at any time that members can recall, even supposing that you were to legislate as in normal times, can you proclaim to the country and the world at large that the dealings of these coalized companies, which we are especially discussing, to-day, have not transgressed the law and outraged human feelings? Are you going to approve of such dealings? If you

do not control them what will the people think of the House of Commons? Moreover, what will they think of our institutions whatever they may be?

I still quote the hon. friend of my colleagues opposite. Should your decision lessen the confidence in parliamentary institution, should it hinder this confidence, the responsibility will fall on each member of the house and the responsibility will be a sad and lasting one.

We have no right, sir, to provoke the people by these kind of coalitions which, I think, are not the only ones operating in this country. It is time—if it is not too late—for the government to act energetically, at the risk of losing some friends, if we do not wish to see those of the underworld replace those who have the care of maintaining order. That is why I have introduced my resolution and I trust that it will receive due consideration by the house.

Mr. ARTHUR DENIS (St. Denis) (Translation): Mr. Speaker, I rise with pleasure to second this resolution. It fell to the lot of an hon. member sitting on the opposition benches to courageously point out to the house and the country that we are, at present, at the mercy of a fuel trust.

Mr. BARRETTE (Translation): Of what?

Mr. DENIS (Translation): Fuel.

Mr. BARRETTE (Translation): What trust?

Mr. DENIS (Translation): I would request the hon. member for Berthier-Maskinongé (Mr. Barrette) to quietly proceed signing the letters he addresses to his constituents whom he is powerless to help.

I was stating that it fell to the lot of an hon. member of the opposition to point out to the country at large that we are at the mercy of a fuel trust, and I shall state it is not the only trust operating in this country. Throughout the entire world trusts are being organized to exploit the consumer. If to-day we are undergoing one of the most severe crises which the country has ever experienced, it is because we are at the mercy of financial trusts and that this government has absolutely done nothing in the last three years to remedy the situation.

Mr. BARRETTE (Translation): What about the coal investigation?

Mr. DENIS (Translation): It is thanks to a representative of the Liberal party in the Senate, if an investigation was held, and not to this government.